1: McGee E-5 (1894-1895)1898 NU31 Seri NU31

prepared by trituration with a pebble or rubbing with the fingers, usually in a shell cup. Sometimes the shell used for the purpose is the valve of a *Cardium*, which serves indiscriminately as cup, spoon, skin-scraper, etc; but preference is apparently given to thick and strong shells, such as the wave-worn valve of *Chama* (?), shown in plate XXVII, figure 7, which are consecrated to the use and eventually buried with the user, together with a supply of the paint (like that illustrated in the cane cylinder—figure 4—which was a mortuary sacrifice). The gypsum is usually carried in natural slabs or other fragments, perhaps rounded by wear (plate XXVII, figures 6 and 8); it is prepared by wetting and rubbing two pieces together, the larger being reduced to metate shape by the operation. The dumortierite was observed only in the form of a pencil made by pulverizing the substance and mixing with sufficient clay to give consistency. The several pigments are applied wet by means of human-hair brushes kept for the purpose, the process occupying from half an hour to three or four hours for the more elaborate designs. So far as observed at Costa Rica in 1894, the paints were mixed in water only; but since painting outfits found on Tiburon island in 1895 were smeared with grease, it is probable that either water or fats may serve for menstrua, at the convenience of the artists. Commonly the process of painting is measurably cooperative. The matron usually depicts her device on the faces of her daughters up to the age of 12 or 15 years, when they learn to make the applications themselves; and frequently two or more women (usually those with similar devices) work together in preparing and applying the pigments, each laying the paint on her own face and apparently guiding her hand partly by the sense of feeling and partly by suggestions from her coworkers; but Candelaria and some other of the younger women at Costa Rica frequently worked alone, aided by a mirror in the form of a shallow bowl of water set in the shadow while the brilliant desert glare fell full on the face.

The mines yielding the pigments were not located. The geologic conditions are such that the ochers are undoubtedly abundant; but it is probable that the gypsum is uncommon and confined to a remote locality or two, and that the dumortierite is rare and scanty here as elsewhere. The care with which the paints are preserved, prepared, and applied, the fact that they are indispensable feminine appurtenances even on the longest journeys, and their sacred rôle in the mortuary customs, all combine to indicate that they are among the most highly prized possessions of the people and by far the most precious of their minerals.

The sematic functions of the designs are esoteric, yet an inkling of their meaning was obtained through Mashém, the interpreter at Costa Rica in 1894; from his expressions it appears that the designs are sacred insignia of totemic character, serving to denote the clans of which the tribe is composed. But three clans were identified, and

642 621 618 714 [786] [476]

The third specification states that a kin group, to constitute a clan, must exhibit actual social integration. Murdock stresses the necessity of observing a positive group sentiment, such as would be manifested by organized collective activities or group functions, before the group can be characterized as a clan. An essential feature of this group sentiment is the inclusion of the wife as an integral member of her husband's kin group.

621 618 [628] [622] [701] [583] [476]

This sort of social integration was indeed exhibited by the Seri kin group of each subdivision. It was, in fact, fostered by the isolation brought about by the inhabitants' reservation of hunting and fishing rights for themselves. Tension existed between certain subdivisions and, since there was no chief, the oldest capable male organized and led the fighting force of the clan. In times of need, the members of the group united to give mutual assistance. The groom-to-be could expect material aid from his fellow clan members in the payment of the bride price. Mutual assistance was given in the fulfillment of puberty ceremony and burial obligations. The men cooperated in their hunting and fishing expeditions. The women of the clan, including the in-married spouses, cooperated in the gathering and sharing of food. Everyone could attend the various fiestas. It is said that in the performance of these collective activities, close harmony generally prevailed.

BAND INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS

642 619 578 [648]

The division of the Seri tribe into bands was likely brought about through internal strife. During the period of band history known to the present-day Seri,[8] however, serious skirmishes seem to have been fought predominantly with non-Seri groups.[9]

Band I

642 621 628 578 [721] [648]

Band I internal relations appear to have been relatively peaceful. The inhabitants of subdivisions 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 were fishermen as well as hunters and gatherers, whereas the people of subdivision 6 preferred to subsist on gathered food and wild game. Also, the members of Band I robbed cattle and horses, which pursuit brought reprisals from the Mexican ranchers. There was apparently considerable social intercourse among the six subdivisions, even to the extent that hunting rights of one were sometimes granted to inhabitants of a neighboring section.

Trouble developed when some members of Band I speared fish within the domain of Band V. Here also bitter fighting broke out, and any semblance of peaceful co-existence between the two groups was destroyed.